

The Mercury News

BayArea
NewsGroup

111

Volume 167, issue 187 ★

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2017

24/7 COVERAGE: MERCURYNEWS.COM » \$1.50



MERRY CHRISTMAS

SEASON OF LIGHTS

Dazzling: Ribbons of color sparkle on trains and trees across the Bay Area



Top: Christmas lights are on display in front of a home on Harriet Avenue in Campbell.
Above: The Niles Canyon Railway's Train of Lights chugs through Niles Canyon in Sunol on Wednesday. The 13-mile, hourlong round trip winds its way through Niles Canyon between Fremont and Sunol and features holiday lights and decorations inside and out, refreshments, music and a visit from Santa Claus.
At left: Christmas lights illuminate a yard on Shubert Drive in Saratoga on Thursday evening.
To see plenty of holiday light exhibits from around the Bay Area, visit our website at www.mercurynews.com.

Staff photos by Nhat V. Meyer, top and left, and Anda Chu, center

SUSPECTED ISIS SYMPATHIZER IN CUSTODY

FBI foils Pier 39 terrorist scheme

Feds arrest Modesto man, accuse him of planning Christmas killing spree

By Robert Salonga
rsalonga@bayareanewsgroup.com

SAN FRANCISCO » A Modesto man who is a Marine-trained sharpshooter is accused of helming a Christmas Day plot to detonate explosives and unleash a hail of bullets at Pier 39 — a scheme that was thwarted by undercover FBI agents who feigned sympathy with his ISIS leanings.

Everitt Aaron Jameson, 26, was arrested Friday and charged in the U.S. District Court for the East-

ern District of California with attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization. He was arraigned in Fresno, but did not enter a plea.

"Today, our incredible law enforcement officers have once again helped thwart an alleged plot to kill Americans," U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions said in a statement. "The



Jameson

PIER 39 » PAGE 6



DAN HONDA — STAFF ARCHIVES

Federal authorities say a Modesto man planned to attack holiday revelers at Pier 39 in San Francisco on Christmas.

Online extra: For up-to-the-minute news on what's going on around the Bay Area, visit MERCURYNEWS.COM

ECONOMY HUMMING

Bay Area hiring slump is over

November sees robust job gains, unemployment rates tumble, led by San Francisco and South Bay

By George Avalos
gavalos@bayareanewsgroup.com

Bay Area jobless rates improved in November to their best levels in at least 18 years, while the statewide jobless rate hit an all-time low as robust job growth arrived just in time for the holidays.

The latest unemployment statistics from California's Employment Development Department and Beacon Economics allayed any fears that the region might tumble into a protracted slowdown, following choppy job numbers earlier this year.

Santa Clara County and the East Bay last month enjoyed their lowest jobless rates since December 1999, while the San Francisco-San Mateo region posted its lowest jobless rate ever, at just 2.2 percent, according to Beacon Economics.

Looking ahead, economists pointed to regional expansion by several of the Bay Area's largest technology companies as a good omen for job growth over the longer term.

"The bottom line is the Bay Area has rebounded from the mid-year slump," said Stephen Levy, director of the Palo Alto-based Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy. "And these job gains are happening even

STRONG JOB MARKET
2.2%

The jobless rate for the San Francisco-San Mateo region, the lowest rate ever.

JOBS » PAGE 6

BAY AREA EMPLOYMENT BOOM

The Bay Area economy powered to a gain of 16,000 jobs during November, while jobless rates improved to their best levels in at least 18 years.

Jobs gained or lost	Total Bay Area jobs
San Francisco area*	10,000
South Bay	4,100
East Bay	2,600
Solano County	100
Marin County	0
Sonoma County	-200
Napa County	-600
Bay Area	16,000

4.0 million
3.8
3.6
3.4
3.2
3.0
'12 '13 '14 '15 '16 '17
October 3,922,900

*San Francisco and San Mateo counties
Sources: State Employment Development Department, Beacon Economics and BANG staff research
BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

STATE LEGISLATURE

Leaders tout harassment inquiry reform

New policy would waive exemptions for record requests on sex claims

By Casey Tolan
ctolan@bayareanewsgroup.com

Reversing course in the face of multiplying scandals, state legislative leaders are promising to release more details about sexual harassment claims and investigations involving lawmakers — even as questions remain about how far any new transparency will go.

For years, legislators have closely guarded their records with the Legislative Open Records Act, or LORA, which contains loopholes letting the Legislature shoot down public records requests more easily than any other government agency in the state. Even as four members of the Legislature have been publicly accused of harassment or other sexual misconduct over the past two months, officials have used the law to block reporters — including those from this news organization — from obtaining details about harassment claims.

LEGISLATURE » PAGE 6

NEWS ON YOUR PHONE

Download the Mercury News mobile app for iPhone or Android.

INDEX

Business C7
Classified CA5

Comics/TV B10
Letters A7
Lottery A2

Movies B9
Obituaries B7
Puzzles B4, C6

WEATHER

H: 57-61 L: 38-41
Full report on B12



digitalfirst
Subscribe:
MercuryNews.com

© Mercury News 2017
40493 00001 1